ABSTRACT

A system, method, and computer program product is provided for the selective

replacement of objectionable content in a program with less-objectionable material. The

selective replacement of objectionable content in a program with less-objectionable

5   material is accomplished by applying an encoding process and a decoding process to

the audio and/or video signal of the program. The encoding process includes marking

potentially objectionable material in the program with replacement information that

identifies the type (e.g., audio, violent content, sexual content, etc.) and intensity level

(e.g., mild, graphic, extreme, etc.) of the potentially objectionable material using

10.   replacement codes. The decoding process includes comparing, during the presentation

of the program to the user and prior to outputting the audio or displaying the video, the

replacement information to a replacement criterion, which includes user supplied

replacement settings, to determine whether replacement of the potentially objectionable

content (i.e., audio and/or video) should be performed. If replacement is to be

15   performed, the objectionable content in the program is replaced according to the

replacement information which, in the preferred embodiment, identifies the start and

duration of the replacement and, for replacement of the video of the program, also

identifies the display area of the video to be replaced.